

FORT MALDEN  
AND  
THE OLD FORT DAYS



RB347318



*Thomas Fisher  
Rare Book Library*

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO





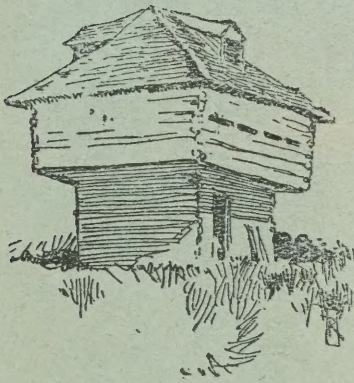


# Fort Malden

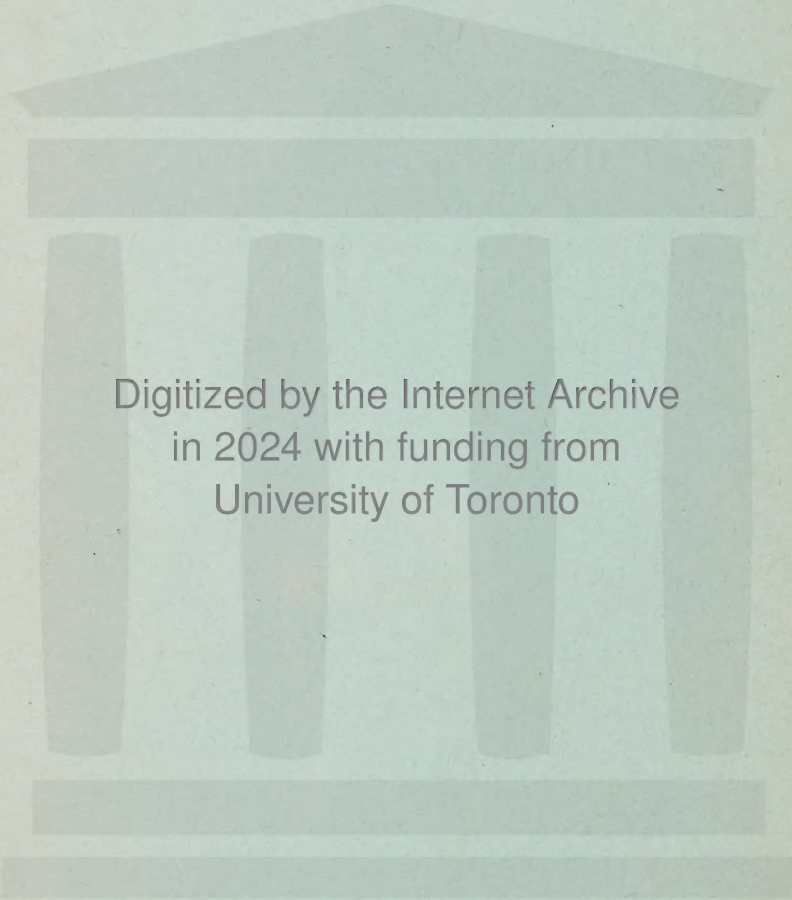
and

## The Old Fort Days

By Rev. Thomas Hattress, B.A.



Compliments of The Amherstburg Echo.



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2024 with funding from  
University of Toronto



# FORT MALDEN

—AND—

## THE OLD FORT DAYS

—BY—

REV. THOMAS NATTRESS, B.A.



*Published on the occasion of a visit of The Ontario Historical Society to  
Amherstburg, June the Second, 1904.*

*Re-published on the occasion of a visit of The Ontario Historical Society,  
the School Teachers of the City of Chatham and East and West Kent  
to Amherstburg, September 12th, 1913.*



AMHERSTBURG, ONTARIO :

PRINTED BY THE ECHO PRINTING COMPANY, LIMITED,  
1913 :

These notes on Fort Malden and the Town of Amherstburg were originally prepared at the solicitation of members of the Essex Historical Society. Every available local source of information was exhausted in the research. Already nearly all the old men whom memories were relied upon for confirmation of fact and detail of historic incident are dead.

No attempt was made to put the notes in magazine form inasmuch as there seemed to be occasion to draw attention to what had already been written and to other available sources of information. Hence the frequent and somewhat copious quotation.

THOMAS NATTRESS,

Amherstburg, June 2nd, 1904.



# Fort Malden

and

## The Old Fort Days.

x x x

Probably the reason why so many of the details of Canadian history have been taken for granted by our history writers, or left untold, is the circumstance that the archives of Britain and France would need to be searched for fuller statement of fact. One of the events, whose scant recording is to be deplored, is the founding of Fort Malden, at the mouth of the Detroit River and head waters of Lake Erie. One sentence only have I found touching its earlier history prior to 1812, a sentence from the illustrated Atlas of the Dominion issued in Toronto in 1881. It is this:—"for years after the treaty of peace had been signed at the close of the War of Independence, the British still held the military post at Detroit; but in 1796 it was turned over to the Americans, and the British selected the site of Amherstburg, which had been laid out as a town the previous year, on which to erect a fort, and to this they removed the guns and stores from Detroit during the year 1796." Mr. F. E. Elliott of the Point Farm immediately below the town, is fully convinced, however, from family reminiscences, that there were fortifications here already when his grandfather, the late Col. Matthew Elliott, came here in 1784. If the presence of old Indian forts in the adjoining townships be an indication, the probability is that he is right.

But though little is found on record of its founding, its subsequent history is common property. Established in the early days in anticipation of events, the events themselves at two important points in our history, proved the utility of the step taken, for in 1812 and again in 1837-'38 there was war upon this frontier.

Amherstburg—the name then as now of the old fort town—was the western centre of warlike demonstrations in the contest of 1812, though the seat of war was the whole Detroit River, on both its banks. On the breaking out of the war Fort Malden was garrisoned by "200 of the 41st, 50 of the Newfoundland company, and 300 of the militia, with a detachment of Royal Artillery, being 600 men in all." (Kingsford.) An old resident of the town is responsible for the statement, that for many years subsequent to 1812 there were but ramparts here, and that the fort buildings were erected only in 1839-40. But the number of men doing service under Colonel Proctor in 1812 would seem to call for some further explanation as to the available accommodations. It is hardly to be supposed that regulars defending a strategic, fortified post, would live out of doors in the fashion of their Indian allies.



Col. St. George was in command of Fort Malden when on July 12, 1812, Gen. Hull crossed from Detroit to the Town of Sandwich at the head of 2,500 regulars of the American army. A few days later an ineffectual attempt was made, under Col. Cass, to take the River Canard bridge, five or six miles above Amherstburg, Fort Malden of course being the objective point. To two brave Canadians (Hancock and Dean) are due the honors of the rencounter, one of whom fell at his post. Manceuvring and skirmishing continued until the arrival of Col. Proctor at Fort Malden on August 5th. Immediately upon his arrival to relieve Col. St. George, he effected a counter-movement by sending a detachment across the river, intercepting the supplies in transport from Ohio for the American forces at Detroit, a stroke of good generalship that necessitated the return of Hull's large force from Sandwich to Detroit. Only 250 men were left on the Canadian side, in a quickly improvised fort that served only the purpose of occupancy for a few days.

Gen. Brock, at this time commander of the Canadian forces, arrived at Fort Malden on the night of August 13th, from York. Next morning he met the Indians in council. Tecumseh urged an immediate attack upon Detroit. Recognizing the wisdom of the old chief's advice, especially after reading Hull's despondent despatches to his government captured by Proctor's intercepting party, Brock at once took up the march. The small American force at Sandwich recrossed the river on his approach, and by the following day he had planted a battery opposite Fort Detroit. Then, having crossed his main army to a convenient point below the city, he advanced to the attack, a denouement averted by Hull's surrender of his post and all his troops and stores.

Kingsford (Vol. VIII, History of Canada, p. 197) gives a full account of the movement effected by Proctor by which he both cut off Gen. Hull's base of supplies and came into possession of the tell-tale letters above mentioned. Here is what he says:—"The United States had no naval force on Lake Erie, and the Queen Charlotte war sloop of eighteen 24-pounder guns was at the disposal of the British. Hearing that a convoy of provisions with a force of 200 men was on the march, Proctor detached a strong party of the 41st, with some Indians under Tecumseh, who placed themselves in ambush near the village of Brownstown, at the mouth of a small stream, some 18 miles south of Detroit. Hull, in expectation of the arrival of the convoy, had dispatched Major Van Horne to bring it in with safety. The detachment was also charged with the despatches of Hull and the letters of the garrison to their friends in the older states. The ambush placed to receive Van Horne on the 5th of August proved a complete surprise. By the unexpected fire of this party 20 were killed, including 5 officers, and 9 were wounded. The detachment was driven back and put to ight, and pursued for 7 miles. The important correspondence that fell into the hands of the British had great weight in the decision of Brock to act aggressively. Consequent upon the affair, Proctor established a post at Brownstown (now called Flat Rock), by which communication with Detroit was interrupted." From the same source we have the further information that a day or two later General Hull "made an effort to reopen his communications to the south, detaching a force of 705 men under Colonel Miller..... About 14 miles below Detroit they came upon a British force under Major Muir of the 41st. .... Muir finding himself greatly outnumbered felt constrained to retreat to his boats..... The skirmish had the effect of preventing any further advance, for the detachment returned the following day to Detroit."

‡ These two engagements were Brownstown (on August 6th, 1812,) and Maguaga (on August 9th, 1812).



Held in check at every move by the superior prowess of the British; alarmed by the fall of Fort Michillimackinac, which gave rise to grave fears of an Indian attack from the northward; having lost 5 officers at Brownstown and 4 others in the fort at Detroit, a shot from an 18-pound gun on the Canadian side of the river penetrating to the mess room and cutting them down at one fell swoop; cut off from his source of supplies; his by this time wholesome respect for the British increased by the report that had reached him of a reinforcement enroute from Niagara; and thwarted by Colonel Cass, who commanded the Ohio militia, in his desire to retreat from Detroit and take up a strong position on the Maumee River; it is little wonder that General Hull surrendered absolutely to General Brock so soon as the latter began to close in on him from both sides of the river and from the river itself. British regulars, Canadian militia, and the intrepid Tecumseh's Indian allies of the British; the Queen Charlotte and the Hunter and their own captured batteaux upon the river; and the guns in Sandwich accurately trained on the fort,—no doubt this all seemed a sufficiently formidable array. And yet, the American people affect to despise the very name of Hull. The capitulation was humiliating enough, indeed, for it "included the entire territory of Michigan with the port of Detroit, the Adams war brig, 2,500 troops embracing the 4th United States regiment with their colors, a company of artillery, some cavalry, a large quantity of stores with 33 pieces of cannon and the military chest; and no prize was greater than the 2,500 stand of arms included, for these supplied a want under which Canada was laboring." (Kingston.)

After the taking of Fort Detroit, General Brock, being commander-in-chief of the Canadian forces hurried back to the Niagara frontier, where the army of the centre (as it was called in the triple-attack plan adopted by the invaders) was now the most active body of the enemy. Here in the battle of Queenston Heights he fell. Mr. Charles G. D. Roberts records in his history of Canada that during the funeral of the slain leader "the minute guns of Fort George were answered gun for gun from the American batteries of Fort Niagara, while the American flag hung at half mast—a chivalrous tribute to an illustrious foe."

"Proctor assumed command at Detroit, and in a series of engagements, in which the Essex militia took part, achieved some important results at various points on the Raisin and the Maumee against the forces of the American general, Harrison. He was finally repulsed by Harrison in his attack upon Fort Meigs and subsequently met with an almost crushing defeat on August 2nd, 1813, at Fort Stephenson, where Fremont now stands, and immediately retreated to Fort Malden to recruit his shattered army. The British fleet also lay off the fort, blockaded by Commodore Perry, whose vessels controlled Lake Erie. Provisions running short in the British camp, it was decided that Commodore Barclay should give the American fleet battle, and on the 10th of September he stood out and bore down upon the enemy. The engagement was a most obstinate one, lasting over three hours, and resulting in the killing of one-third of the British force and capture of the entire fleet." (Illustrated Atlas of the Dominion of Canada, 1881.)

It is said that the officers from the fort watched the progress of the engagement from the Lake Erie shore in Colchester, climbing the trees to get a better range with their glasses. Doubtless this is true. The knowledge so gained, taken together with facts already related and other facts to be related, would go far to account for what has been studiously represented as the very precipitate action of Col. Proctor in blowing up Forts Malden and Detroit and retreating into the interior. Tecumseh's wrath so freely and

forcibly expressed at the colonel's expense upon that occasion may after all have lent undue color to the ignominy of the retreat.

General Harrison followed up the advantages gained over the Canadian forces at Fort Stephenson and Fort Meigs on the Maumee, as was to be expected he would, bringing his forces across the river and landing at Bar Point, from flat boats. Thence he threw a detachment across Marsh Creek and, with colors flying and to the strains of martial music, led his men along the two sides of the Creek in the direction of Fort Malden. On the Rennolds farm, now owned by Mr. Edward Honor and Mr. Perry B. Leighton, just outside the limits of the town, he encountered the pickets from the garrison and six men fell in the skirmish. It would appear that the American forces camped upon his ground as though to await developments. On Mr. Honor's farm there are \*earthworks to be seen, as plainly traceable as though they were of yesterday. These were thrown up by General Harrison. A description of them will not be without interest. Beginning at the line which now divides the two farms named and on the elevation which bounds the marsh on east side and extending sixty yards S. by E. to where the embankment begins to fall away, is a double line of breastworks, formed by scooping out the earth from the face of the bank a few feet from its foot, and throwing this earth uphill. By this means ample protection would be afforded a double line of rifle-men, one above the other, lying prone and ready to receive an enemy from the west. From the point where the bank of the marsh begins to recede and to fall away the earthworks extend due east some thirty yards, affording protection against an enemy from the north (or south) as well as a means of communication between the part of the earthworks first mentioned and a third part extending sixty yards due south from the east end of the second part. A very pretty piece of rapid, temporary work. A second skirmish followed in the neighborhood of where Mr. Wigle's flouring mill now stands, probably on the rising ground. Then followed the disastrous retreat in which Proctor was the determined and Tecumseh the unwilling participant and which terminated in the ‡Battle of the Long Woods.

Thus have we, by the aid of readily accessible records and the memories of men living, traced the history of old Fort Malden from its earliest days up to the day it was blown up and completely abandoned, towards the close of the second year of the war of 1812-14. Only the earth works remained, destined to become the scene of further military operations in the oncoming War of the Rebellion of 1837-38.

An incident well worthy of being reproduced is recorded in the Dominion Atlas (1881) that shows the substantial and dependable spirit of Canadians. "During the autumn of 1813, while the British lay at Amherstburg the men of Colchester and Gosfield applied to Proctor for permission to go home and harvest their crops. This was denied them, whereupon they left the camp in a body, carrying their arms and accoutrements to their homes. Proctor sent peremptory orders for them to return at once, which they answered by saying they would return when their crops were harvested and not before. He thereupon sent a messenger to say that he would send the Indians to bring either them or their scalps into the British camp; to which they returned answer that in such event they would teach both the Indians and the British some more interesting game than they had yet learned from the Americans, if he dared molest them. After this they were left to their own way, and when their harvests were secured they all returned to the camp in a body as they had promised. During the furlough they formed

\* This information was given by Mr. Edward Honor, who received it from the late Pirish Barron. Mr. Barron's farm was near Bar Point in Malden Township. He saw Harrison's soldiers land.

‡ Also known as the Battle of the Thames, and the Battle of Moravian Town.



reliefs and worked by squads, first on the farm of one then on another, till all was completed, keeping guard against any possible scalping expedition of the treacherous allies of the British. The men carried their arms to the field with them, and the little children were trained as videttes to watch each road and path and forest trail."

There is but little on record of the now dismantled fort up to the breaking out of the war of 1837-'38. The British were in undisputed possession of the Canadian frontier during the interval and the country immediately round about began to be settled up and cleared of timber. In addition to the mainland, Bois Blanc Island abreast of the town of Amherstburg was (as it is to-day) Canadian territory, and was about to become the scene of considerable military manœuvring. There is much of romance about the early history of the island, as there is indeed about its later history too; but it is not with romance we are presently concerned. It was not till the second year of the war of 1837-'38 that activities began here again. At that date there was no garrison at the fort. But the citizens and the farmers of the adjoining townships had not forgotten, some the actual training in the field; the others the memory and inspiration, of the war of 1812. They now mustered in defence of their country to the number of some two thousand strong. It was on Bois Blanc the enemy first sought a footing, thinking to approach the town under cover of the magnificent woods that then clothed the island. Ah me! What goings and comings has not that pretty, sheltered stretch of water been the pathway of that laves the foot of all these pretty islands from Elliott's Point across to Gibraltar, Grosse Isle, Hickory, Sugar Island and Bois Blanc. By this way escaping slaves have won across to freedom's country in the dead of night! What contraband goods have come and gone this way! Here went the checking party in 1812, Tecumseh of their number, and came back victorious! Hither came the invading enemy in 1838—and fled precipitate! Bravo! Canadian volunteers; the enemy never finds you off your guard!

Had it not been for the American war schooner that patrolled the channel between Bois Blanc and Amherstburg, cannonading the town, the tragedy of 1838 might have turned out more seriously for us than it did. The party that crossed over to the island on the 8th of January of that year to repel the invaders might possibly have themselves been repelled. But when the guns on the American schooner began their booming up the river our men recrossed in safety and awaited their opportunity. Having no cannon to reply to the loud barking of the enemy's dogs of war they must, perforce, rely upon their rifles and muskets and fowling pieces. But, presto! the helmsmen of the schooner *Anne* are dropped at their post as fast as they can be replaced. Her halliards are shot away. The sails flounder and fall to encumber the deck, riddled like a sieve with bullet holes. She drifts, aimless—and fetches up on the sandy beach. The insurgents are now completely discouraged; and again, as in 1812, a handsome prize falls to the lot of our militia in the shape of 200 stands of small arms, a considerable quantity of ammunition and their field pieces. One of these latter ornaments the grass plot in front of the present Town Hall in Amherstburg.

Mr. Read, in his *History of the Rebellion*, says the insurgent leader Sutherland, I have quoted freely here and elsewhere, both because the narrative is succinct and full, and in order to direct attention to authorities and possible sources of information. I have also mentioned Scotchman turned adventurer, had but sixty men on Bois Blanc, whilst the schooner *Anne* was manned by eighteen. The expectation was that the Canadians would lose no time in joining the insurgents, to right their wrongs, real or supposed. Upon this fellow had been conferred by van Rensselaer, (who was in command of the "Army of the Centre" in the invasion of 1812, and who was among the wounded at Queens-

ton Heights), the general of the army of invasion, the rank of Brigadier-General.

"From his headquarters on Bois Blanc Island Sutherland issued a proclamation breathing sentiments of devotion to Canada and her political interests. Here is his manifesto:

PROCLAMATION TO THE CITIZENS OF UPPER CANADA.

You are called upon by the voices of your bleeding country to join the patriot forces and free your lands from tyranny. Hordes of worthless parasites of the British crown are quartered upon you to devour your substance, to outrage your rights, to let loose upon your defenceless wives and daughters a brutal soldiery. Rally then around the standard of liberty and a victory and a glorious future of independence will be yours." (Read.)

We have seen what answer he got; the kind of victory that was won, and the temper of law-abiding, peace-loving citizens, who issue from happy homes to defend their country's honor by force of arms when there is need, but who, in other circumstances, prefer to set their wrongs right by constitutional means.

There still continued some low rumblings of war, though this principal attempt on Fort Malden had proven futile. Gen. Hardy, Sutherland's rival, now in command, proposed to take the province from Sugar Island as his headquarters, whither Sutherland's men had retreated from Bois Blanc. "He found, however, that he had neither men, arms nor ammunition sufficient to cope with the Royal Canadian Militia, which stood ready to receive him on the Canadian shore. In this helpless condition he was forced to apply to the American authorities for friendly assistance to extricate him from his position. The Governor of Michigan † went in a steamer to Sugar Island, took over the arms, and Gen. Hardy and his forces evacuated the island."

An expedition led by a refugee named McLeod was dislodged from Fighting Island in Detroit River on the 24th February, '38. It was an artillery engagement. Major Townsend with a detachment of the 32nd regiment from Fort Malden arrived upon the scene in the night, and was joined towards morning by the Kent volunteers from Windsor under Baby. But these were not engaged. At daybreak Captain Glasgow of the artillery corps swept the enemy from their island lodgement from across the water, and with only three guns. Subsequently the defeated insurgents were disarmed and dispersed by the American authorities.

On these two occasions during this war our American neighbors did us the good office of relieving our enemies of their arms in their last extremity, and did themselves a good turn by dispersing a body of malcontents whose presence now within their borders boded the country no good.

"In March, 1838, American sympathizers made another attempt to take Canada, this time by way of Pelee Island. About four hundred men mustered on the island with this object. \* \* \* They were not permitted to reach the main shore. British troops, consisting of five companies of regulars, with about two hundred militia and Indians, under command of General Maitland, made a descent upon the island, defeated the self-styled patriots, killing about sixty of them and making prisoners of nine, Gen. Sutherland being one of the prisoners, and left the balance of the rebel force to their fate." (Read.) There is a difference of opinion as to where and exactly when this notorious character, Sutherland, was taken prisoner. The other account, and the one which I believe to be authentic, is related to me by different parties long resident in Amherstburg and hereabout and confirmed by Alexander Callam, Esq., a gentleman now over



ninety years of age, the oldest resident of them all. He relates that Col. Prince took the two rebel generals prisoners on the ice as he returned from the routing of the rebels on Pelee Island; that they were not on the island, but heard of the gathering of the insurgents there and were crossing over on foot from their forlorn headquarters on Sugar Island. Mr. Callam had himself crossed the ice on the same day, but from the direction of Monroe in Lower Michigan, and saw the two men at Amherstburg in Col. Prince's charge, who claimed the honor of their capture personally.

Still another attempt was made to invade Canada, this time by an attack upon Windsor, and again the regulars from Fort Malden and the Essex militia gave a good account of themselves. A detachment of Royal Artillery under Col. Broderick came to the assistance of the militia already on the ground and drove the invaders back across the river. Col. Prince says in his report of this attack upon Windsor:—"Of the brigands and pirates twenty-one were killed, besides four who were brought in just at the close and immediately after the engagement,—all of whom I ordered to be shot on the spot; and it was done accordingly." It was the execution of these four men that afterward brought such a storm about the ears of Col. Prince on the floor of the House of Commons. But, as Mr. Read has it, "Col. Prince's justice had a salutary and deterrent effect, there were no more raids after Windsor." Were it permissible to put into print some facts in the case as related to him by an old member of the 34th regiment and vouched for by him, every Britisher would applaud Col. Prince, for the summary justice meted out to the four fiends, on the same principle that punitive expeditions are sent out by the British Government to-day and approved by all.

Col. Rankin, of subsequent local fame, then but a youth of twenty-two, an officer of militia under Col. Prince, captured the colors of the insurgents at the battle of Windsor, and was complimented in the parliamentary debate which condemned Prince with so much vigor.

Explanatory of the movements of the enemy and of the Canadian and British forces, it may be said that the months of January and February, 1838, were as warm as summer, the rigors of winter not being realized till March. This I am told by Militiaman Girardin, who still lives in Amherstburg, and who says he answered the first call to arms in his shirt-sleeves, so mild was the weather, but afterward crossed to Pelee Island in March, under General Maitland's command, in a sleigh. He tells me too that the larger number of the volunteers who crossed over to Pelee Island to rout the invaders became separated from the rest of the forces and, crossing the island without encountering the fleeing enemy, were obliged to content themselves with carrying off the abandoned supplies; whilst the regular soldiers kept to the ice around the west side of the island and came suddenly upon a detachment of the invaders ensconced behind a windrow. It was here that the execution was done. Among the rest who fell were five men to whose grateful memory the monument was erected that stands in the English church graveyard in the Town of Amherstburg. Four of them belonged here and one was from St. Thomas.

The same informant, whose father served in the war of 1812, relates (and his statement is substantiated by others) that the schooner *Anne* was brought into port and used as a guardhouse during the continuance of the war, and was broken up for firewood when the war was over. Her figure-head was for a long time in possession of the late A. H. Wagner, Esq., postmaster of Windsor, and was probably burned in the Windsor fire of Oct. 12th, 1871. The second "schooner" mentioned by some writers of the history of the period was only a flat scow bearing supplies, and was also seized. Mr. Girardin is of opinion that not only one but both the cannons in front of the Town Hall in Amherstburg

are off the Anne. The third, he says, is buried under the dock at the foot of Murray street, where was the old town hall and market square, it having incurred the displeasure of the populace one summer holiday by blowing out the eyes of one citizen and destroying the thumb of another in its frantic efforts to "go off." George Gott, Esq., ex-Collector of Customs at this port, who was himself a member of the 34th regiment, stationed here in 1838, confirms this statement, but he says that, although one of the cannons in possession of the town, the long one, is off the American schooner, the other is a gun from the fort. He himself effected the exchange at the time when the cannons were being removed from the fort to be broken up. One of the three captured cannons was found when taken to be loaded to the muzzle with bits of chain and all sorts of missiles; and the grateful people who had watched the vessel's movements from the river bank recall the fact that they had witnessed repeated unsuccessful attempts to fire it. (See Baby, "Souvenirs of the Past.") The prisoners taken with the schooner were sent to London. Afterward three of them—the so-called "General" Theller, Captain Brophy and Col. Dodge, a lawyer of Toledo,—were transferred to the citadel at Quebec. Theller and Dodge escaped subsequently to the American side.

During the Rebellion, Fort Malden was garrisoned by a detachment of the 24th Battalion, another of the 32nd, the 34th Regiment under Col. Erie, a battery of artillery, and as many of the Essex militia as the exigencies of the situation from time to time demanded. \*The latter were, when embodied with the garrison, in essential particulars considered on the same footing with the regular troops. (Vide Lieut.-Gov. Gore to James Baby, 28th Dec., 1807; Canadian Archives.) The 43rd Light Infantry were here immediately after the rebellion, Col. Booth in command; Sergt.-Major Furlong, second in command. Next came a detachment of the 89th Regiment, which had been stationed at Montreal after returning from the West Indies in '44. Last of all came three companies of the Royal Canadians. These were transferred in 1851, after which date no regular garrison was stationed at the fort.

Forty and odd years ago there was 108 British army pensioners at Amherstburg. †But two or three of these are left. Sergt. Sullivan, already named, is authority for the statement that the resident pensioners were enrolled to do necessary duty after the removal of the Royal Canadian Rifles. Twelve men a day were on guard, chosen from the alphabetic roll. Each twelve served a month, and were relieved by other twelve. For this service each man was paid one half-dollar a day in addition to his pension. On the Queen's birthday a review was held so long as a guard was maintained, and on this occasion each man received a sovereign.

The Royal Canadians, the last detachment that garrisoned the fort, was made up of men of 14 years' service in the British army—good conduct men. Soldiers might volunteer from any regiment, in Canada, at home or abroad.

The 34th regiment had been stationed at Halifax previous to the breaking out of the rebellion in 1837, at which time orders were issued to proceed to Quebec, by ship to St. John's, thence overland. Mr. Gott, who has been already named as a member of the 34th, has a very distinct recollection of the movements of the regiment. Between St. John's and Quebec there was considerable counter-marching. At Quebec, the regiment was ordered to march to Toronto, doing duty as they went. At Toronto the order was issued to march immedi-

\* Sergeant Sullivan, who belonged to the 43rd, was the informant.

† One of these is Mrs. Bridget Horan, who nursed the wounded British soldiers at the Crimea, along with Florence Nightingale.



ately to Amherstburg. From Port Stanley to Fort Malden the distance was covered by boat, and the long and weary march was ended, but not the work. The bastions at the fort were rebuilt and the fortifications got in good repair. Nor was there any too much time to get the fort in readiness, for the regiment did not reach Amherstburg till the early part of '38, and that was the rebellion year in this part of the country. A letter dated at Amherstburg, August 7th, 1807, from Lieut.-Col. Grant to Military Secretary James Green, gives a description of the fort that might almost be taken as coming from the pen of the commanding officer in 1838:—"There are four bastions, one at each angle, but one is unserviceable and excluded from the works. The picketing is entirely decayed and fallen down." (Canadian Archives, series C, vol. 973, p. 106.)

The defence of the fort in 1838 consisted of ten 24-pounders, six 6-pounders, three brass field pieces, six mortar guns and a number of rocket tubes, besides the full complement of small arms. There is at the present time plainly visible the well defined outline of a mortarbed in the only remaining trench, the one on the north side of the works. Another of the mortar batteries was immediately in rear of where the last of the old flagstaff still stands on the rear of the southwest bastion. The two front bastions are well preserved, the angles being as sharp as the day they were built. On the east side of the fort there was a double defence formed by two rows of pointed pickets, one on the moat outside the trench and the other on the inner side of the trench. The sally-port crossed this east trench alongside the east bastion. This is doubtless the bastion that was spoken of in 1807 as unserviceable and excluded from the works. It was of a different form from the others in 1838. But the trenches on the east side have been filled in and the bastions levelled in the construction of a roadway.

\* In 1838 the buildings, etc., in connection with the Fort were all located along the river front from where the Post Office now is, northward. This was the government woodyard; and from this point from south to north in the order named, were the commissary department (a part of the old brick building is still standing), the dock yards and government stores, the hospital and the officers' quarters. Part of the foundation of the old King's wharf is still traceable. The root-house also which belongs to the officers' quarters is still a substantial building. It stands on the old McLeod homestead. The space between the officers' quarters and the southwest bastion of the fort was protected by a row of pickets, as was also the space between the two front bastions not otherwise protected by trench or moat.

A map of the Town of Amherstburg drafted by R. J. Pilkington and bearing date 3rd June, 1831, indicates that the military reserve or garrison common embraced all the territory between Richmond St., the then northerly boundary of the town and the \*Gordon Farm on the north side, and between the Bell Farm on the east and the Detroit River westward. The part of this territory of which most use was made prior to the advent of the pensioners was west of the Sandwich road and south from the fort to Richmond St. The territory east of the Sandwich road was afterwards apportioned to the pensioners. The government built the houses on the apportioned grounds, charging the pensioners £40 apiece for them, deducting the money in small amounts from the pensions till the total was made up. Besides the land grant and the regular pension and the perquisites already named in another part of this record, each pensioner was given a government cheque for £10 on coming here, to enable him to make a start in his new home. The ex-Collector of Customs at this port

\* Many of the old farms hereabouts, like these two, are still called by the names of their first owners.

was then in business in the town, and says that he has cashed a goodly number of these cheques.

A part of the defense not yet specified was the block-houses on Bois Blanc Island. There were three of them, known as the north, centre and south block-houses, or No. 1, No. 2 and No. 3. The south block-house still stands as in the old days. The one at the north end was burned some twenty-six years ago. The centre one stands on the west side of the island and is embodied in the Col. Atkinson summer residence. About opposite it, on the east side of the island, and abreast of Richmond street, there was a Picket Barracks, long afterwards used as a dwelling, but not now standing. One of the numerous lake captains residing in Amherstburg still recalls the incidents of a happy boyhood spent in and around the old Barracks after it had degenerated into the commonplace civilian's house.







